

## Doors and Windows

Well-maintained storefront systems and creative displays are critical to doing good business and to attracting more sales. Together, your storefront's doors, display windows and transom are called a "storefront system." The system works together as a unit. Therefore, the use of materials, colors and window glazing should be consistent or compatible. They allow those passing by to see your merchandise or service and attract potential customers into your store. Your storefront system is your greatest marketing opportunity so the more storefront windows that people can see through, the better. In general, greater visibility into the store is more inviting and makes potential customers feel more secure.

### DOORS

Storefront doors are best recessed from the storefront wall so that customers are shielded from weather upon entering or leaving your business.

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The District has building codes and accessibility requirements for storefront doors. All new installations must be in compliance with these requirements.

### ENCOURAGED

- Restoring or replacing doors with appropriate commercial doors.
- Installing storefront doors made of glass or containing significant glass to allow additional visibility into a business.
- Adding new doors when required to meet disabled accessibility laws.
- Maintaining the continuity of storefronts on the primary business street by locating loading and service entrances on the side or rear of a building where possible.
- Installing new and maintaining existing durable wood or metal frame doors that can be painted a variety of colors to emphasize the business entry while adding visual interest.
- Installing folding/sliding doors that allow the activity of a business to be opened up to the sidewalk.

### STRONGLY DISCOURAGED

- Adding new doors that are not required by code and which are inconsistent with the building and/or storefront image.
- Sealing or closing off existing entrances or doorways with any material.
- Blocking doors with merchandise or any other obstruction.
- Installing doorways that swing out directly onto sidewalks.
- Covering or replacing glass door panels with any opaque substance or material that would prevent or limit visibility.
- Covering doorways with signage, interior cases or woodwork.

### DOOR EXAMPLES



# display windows

Display windows are the greatest marketing opportunity for a competitive business to attract the attention of those passing by and to generate new sales. Highly successful storefronts use transparent glass that allow potential customers who are walking or riding by to see that the store is open for business and that the business owner is competitively offering quality merchandise. Storefront transparency during

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both daytime and nighttime hours is critical. Visibility during both periods is important for continuous marketing and branding of the business, as well as

promoting a sense of safety in the business district. (Creative solutions for combining business security with storefront visibility when your store is closed are on page 25.)

Frequently changing displays help to market the variety of goods and services offered in your business while also giving your business and business districts

character and interest. The original size, division, and shape of display window areas should be preserved when possible. Creative and thoughtful innovation, however, is desired and strongly encouraged.



DEJA BLUE (GEORGETOWN)



ORGANIC MARKET (CAPITOL HILL)

## ENCOURAGED

- Restoring or increasing the percentage or amount of transparent glass on a storefront.
- Replacing dark tinted or textured glass with clear glass when appropriate to increase visibility into the business.
- Matching new windows to originals.
- Preserving historic features such as frames, special glazing, and decorative moldings.
- Aligning window heights and unifying window sizes when appropriate.
- Painting window frames in order to add visual variety and interest.
- Using aluminum or wood frame windows that provide thermal insulation and prevent condensation. Non-traditional colors are encouraged for either frame type.
- Using upper floor windows that might be boarded up as retail display areas.

## STRONGLY DISCOURAGED

- Preventing visibility into display areas by covering or blocking a display window.
- Obstructing views into a business by using glass block, woodwork, paint, signage, lowered ceilings, shelves, refrigeration units, cases, posters, or other items except products being temporarily marketed by the business.
- Covering or obscuring existing window trim with metal or other materials.
- Removing historic windows or window components when restoration and maintenance are possible.
- Using less durable materials such as Plexiglass.
- Failing to maintain and repair broken or boarded display windows.



# display windows

## EXAMPLES OF DISPLAY WINDOWS MERCHANDISING, AND LIGHTING TECHNIQUES



PASARGAD (DUPONT CIRCLE)

NOTE USE OF UPPER FLOOR WINDOWS FOR DISPLAY



GINZA (DUPONT CIRCLE)



CAPITOL HILL BIKES (CAPITOL HILL)



(GEORGETOWN)



THE PROPER TOPPER  
(DUPONT CIRCLE)



(DUPONT CIRCLE)



RIGGS BANK (DUPONT CIRCLE)

NOTE UP LIGHTING ON BUILDING DETAILS



CONNECTICUT AVE. WINE-LIQUOR-DELI (DUPONT CIRCLE)



BETSY FISHER – (DUPONT CIRCLE)

NOTE USE OF THE INTERIOR WIRE MESH SECURITY GRILL